
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Cleveland Park Historic District	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agenda
Address:	3432 Newark Street, NW	<input type="checkbox"/> Consent
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept
Meeting Date:	December 15, 2011	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alteration
Case Number:	12-039	<input type="checkbox"/> New Construction
Staff Reviewer:	Amanda Molson	<input type="checkbox"/> Demolition
		<input type="checkbox"/> Subdivision

Owners Frank LaPrade and Tamara Clarke, with plans prepared by Cunningham Quill, PLLC, request concept approval for a rear addition and front window alteration at 3432 Newark Street, NW in the Cleveland Park Historic District.

Property Description

Constructed in 1897 according to designs prepared by famed local architect Waddy B. Wood, 3432 Newark Street, NW is a two-story plus basement residence. Wood selected the horizontal proportions, overhanging eaves, and stucco treatment typical of the Italian Villa style. Still in his 20s when he designed the subject property, Wood was at the beginning of a career that would later include joining Wood, Donn & Deming and then working in private practice during his most active years.

The front elevation is distinguished by the wide, open portico and second floor balcony, which features a railing style common to Roman architecture. On the rear elevation, a frame ell is topped by a stucco parapet wall, behind which a Palladian window is partially visible on the second floor. While views of the rear elevation are somewhat limited from Newark Street, the back of the property is quite visible from Macomb Playground in the middle of the block.

Proposal

On the front elevation, the applicants propose to replace the existing window that accesses the second-story balcony with a multi-light door. Photographic evidence supports the argument that this was originally a door, with the door threshold still intact and siding infill clearly covering the lower portion of the opening to shorten it for a window. On the rear elevation, the applicants wish to construct a three-story addition (two-stories plus an extension of the walk-out basement level). Set in slightly (11") on each side and extending 20' in depth, the new addition would replace the existing frame ell. Although it would extend close to the width of the house on the basement and first floor levels, a void would be left in the middle of the second floor in order to preserve views to and from the existing Palladian window.

Evaluation

While broad and imposing in appearance, the house is not overtly large as compared to many other Cleveland Park residences, and the Board has approved numerous large rear additions in this neighborhood in recent years. Although the new rear addition approaches the size of what will remain of the historic house, it replaces a rear ell that was already over 25' wide and 13' deep. The side setbacks, though minimal, do provide some differentiation of old from new. Keeping the roof ridge of the addition below that of the main house and leaving an open void on the second floor help to establish the addition as a secondary feature.

This open void on the second story rear arguably presents somewhat of a challenge in honoring the inherent horizontality of the house, which is so common to the Mediterranean styles. Utilizing this setback inevitably enhances the perception of two vertical towers capped by smaller, peaked roofs rather than one wide expanse, and the Palladian window will now be sited down a narrow break in the rear wall. The applicants have successfully used detailing such as continuous bands of horizontal trim boards to mitigate the height, and one could argue that the parapet wall currently obscuring views of the Palladian window is no better a condition than the proposed tunnel effect. Other solutions, such as eliminating the void altogether, would likely mean losing the view from and to this ornate window and sacrificing the massing relief that the void provides.

Considering the Board's relative flexibility on rear alterations and on matters of personal taste, the addition is compatible with the character of the historic house and with the Cleveland Park Historic District in height, massing, materials, fenestration, and overall design.

Recommendation

The HPO recommends that the Board approve the concept as consistent with the purposes of the preservation act and delegate final approval to staff.